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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-42 (cancelled)

Claim 43 (new): An apparatus for tracking aggregate web trends, comprising:

canonicalization logic for canonicalizing events into canonical terms, wherein the events reflect activity by a plurality of users on at least one server and occur over a period of time;

categorization logic for aiding in categorization of each canonical term into at least one category;

term counting logic for incrementing a count associated with each canonical term for each event associated with that canonical term; and

normalizing logic operable to form statistics relating to aggregate interests of the plurality of users in each canonical term over the period of time.

Claim 44 (new): The apparatus of claim 43, further comprising category count logic for incrementing a count associated with each category for each event associated with canonical terms categorized into that category.

Claim 45 (new): The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the normalizing logic is operable to form statistics reflecting aggregate changes in interest of the plurality of users across categories.

Claim 46 (new): The apparatus of claim 45, wherein the normalizing logic is operable to form a ranked list of canonical terms exhibiting highest aggregate change in interest across categories.

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Claim 47 (new): The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the normalizing logic is operable to form a ranked list of canonical terms exhibiting highest aggregate change in interest in a selected category.

Claim 48 (new): The apparatus of claim 47, wherein the normalizing logic is operable to accept a limitation on the period of time over which the events took place, and to form a ranked list of canonical terms exhibiting highest aggregate change in interest in the selected category over that limited period of time.

Claim 49 (new): The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the statistics include percentage changes in aggregate user interest in each canonical term, and statistics indicating current aggregate user interest in each canonical term.

Claim 50 (new): The apparatus of claim 49, wherein the statistics include percentage changes in aggregate user interest and current aggregate user interest in canonical terms in a selected category, and further comprising a user interface operable to accept a selection to sort the canonical terms in the selected category by one of current aggregate user interest and percentage change in aggregate user interest.

Claim 51 (new): The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the normalizing logic is operable to accept limitation on the period of time over which the events took place, and to form a ranked list of canonical terms exhibiting highest aggregate change in interest over that limited period of time, and to form current aggregate interest level statistics for each of the ranked list canonical terms.

Claim 52 (new): The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the statistics include percentages of aggregate change in interest for each category, and statistics indicating current aggregate user interest in each category.

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Claim 53 (new): The apparatus of claim 52, wherein the statistics further include a ranking of the percentages of aggregate change in category interest among a selected portion of the categories.

Claim 54 (new): The apparatus of claim 43, further comprising a database with demographic information for at least a portion of the plurality of users, and wherein the statistics include statistics reflecting aggregate change in interest for each canonical term in a selected category for users having at least one selected demographic characteristic for which information exists in the database.

Claim 55 (new): The apparatus of claim 54, wherein the statistics include statistics reflecting aggregate change in interest in each category for users having the at least one selected demographic characteristic.

Claim 56 (new): The apparatus of claim 54, wherein the statistics include statistics reflecting aggregate change in interest for a canonical term across categories for users having the at least one selected demographic characteristic.

Claim 57 (new): The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the events include a click stream input received from one of the plurality of users in response to search results provided to that user based on a canonical term, and the categorization logic, based on the click stream input, is operable to categorize the canonical term into another category.

Claim 58 (new): The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the events include indications of page views, indications of search terms and indications of click streams received from users of the plurality in response to search results provided in response to canonicalized search input.

Claim 59 (new): The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the statistics include aggregate changes in interest and current interest levels of the plurality of users for selected canonical terms across at least a portion of the categories, and further comprising a display illustrating a list of the portion of the categories, both the aggregate changes in interest and current interest levels for the

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selected canonical terms, and navigable links for further information relating to the selected canonical terms.

Claim 60 (new) The apparatus of claim 59, wherein the further information includes categories in which the selected canonical terms have been categorized.

Claim 61 (new) The apparatus of claim 59, wherein the portion of the categories includes a set of vertical market categories.

Claim 62 (new): The apparatus of claim 43, further comprising an interface operable to receive a selection of at least one canonical term and at least one category, and further comprising a result output operable to display both the aggregate changes in interest and current interest levels for the at least one canonical term and the at least one category.

Claim 63 (new): The apparatus of claim 62, wherein the selected at least one category is a subcategory of another category, the another category is associated with other subcategories, and further comprising a result output operable to display aggregate changes in interest in the other subcategories.

Claim 64 (new): The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the categorization logic is further for aiding in categorization of canonical terms into at least one subcategory, and further comprising a result output operable to display a listing of subcategories associated with a selected category, aggregate changes in interest for the subcategories under the selected category and current interest levels for the subcategories under the selected category.

Claim 65 (new): The apparatus of claim 43, further comprising user interface logic operable to receive a selection including at least one canonical term, and at least one category, and the statistics include aggregate interest level and aggregate change in interest level in each of selected canonical terms and categories.

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Claim 66 (new) The apparatus of claim 65, wherein the user interface logic is further operable to receive, with the selection of the at least one canonical term, a selection of at least one category for limiting statistics relating to the at least one canonical term, the statistics relating to the at least one canonical term including aggregate interest level and aggregate change in interest level in that canonical term for only that selected category.

Claim 67 (new) The apparatus of claim 65, wherein the user interface logic is operable to store the selection of the at least one canonical term and the at least one category, and to associate the stored selection of the at least one canonical term and the at least one category with a login identification.

Claim 68 (new): A computer-aided method of quantifying aggregate topical interest of web site users, comprising:

canonicalizing events occurring on at least one server into canonical terms;

incrementing a count associated with each canonical term for each event canonicalized into that canonical term;

associating each canonical term with at least one category;

normalizing counts associated with canonical terms to emphasize time dependent variation in aggregate user interest in those canonical terms; and

outputting the normalized counts formatted to illustrate the time dependent variation in aggregate user interest.

Claim 69 (new): The method of claim 68, further comprising incrementing a count associated with each category for each event canonicalized into canonical terms associated with that category.

Claim 70 (new): The method of claim 68, wherein the events occur on servers hosting a portal.Web site.

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Claim 71 (new): The method of claim 68, wherein the servers host a plurality of portal Web sites.

Claim 72 (new): The method of claim 68, wherein the events originate from a constrained set of clients.

Claim 73 (new): The method of claim 72, wherein the constrained set of clients comprises clients connecting to a network via a selected service provider.

Claim 74 (new): The method of claim 72, wherein the constrained set of clients comprises clients entering search events via a predefined portal Web site.

Claim 75 (new): The method of claim 68, wherein the events include purchase transactions.

Claim 76 (new): The method of claim 68, wherein the events include downloading of media objects.

Claim 77 (new): The method of claim 68, wherein the events include searches involving entry of at least one search term.

Claim 78 (new): The method of claim 68, further comprising the steps of:
    determining a set of one or more demographic parameters relating to users to which the events are attributable; and
    using the determined set of one or more demographic parameters to distribute the counts associated with canonical terms over a plurality of demographic divisions.

Claim 79 (new): The method of claim 68, further comprising a step of allocating advertising space based on the counts associated with canonical terms.

Claim 80 (new): The method of claim 68, further comprising the steps of:
    collecting counts associated with canonical terms prior to a campaign;
    executing the campaign;

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collecting counts associated with canonical terms after executing the campaign; and

comparing the counts associated with canonical terms before and after the campaign as a measure of campaign effectiveness.

Claim 81 (new): The method of claim 68, further comprising performing intersection analysis.

Claim 82 (new): The method of claim 68, further comprising performing associated interests analysis.

Claim 83 (new): The method of claim 68, further comprising a step of generating an advertisement wherein content of the advertisement is a function of the traffic statistics.

Claim 84 (new): A computer-aided method of accumulating counts for categories and subjects of search events, comprising:

receiving a search request from a client;

canonicalizing the search request into a canonical search term;

providing a set of search results in response to the search request;

accepting a selection from the client;

determining whether the search request should be canonicalized into at least one other canonical search term based on the selection;

incrementing counts associated with canonical search terms into which the search request was canonicalized;

associating each of the canonical search terms with at least one category; and

normalizing the counts associated with canonical search terms to obtain indicia of change in aggregate user interest in the canonical search terms.

Claim 85 (new): The computer-aided method of claim 84, further comprising incrementing counts associated with each category for each search request canonicalized into a canonical search term associated with that category.

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Claim 86 (new): The computer-aided method of claim 84, further comprising normalizing the counts associated with canonical search terms to obtain indicia of current levels of aggregate user interest in the canonical search terms.

Claim 87 (new): An apparatus for identifying affinity among search terms, comprising:

canonicalization logic for canonicalizing searches into canonical terms, the searches inputted by a plurality of users on at least one server;

categorization logic for aiding in categorization of each canonical term into at least one category;

term counting logic for incrementing a count associated with each canonical term for each event associated with that canonical term;

category count logic for incrementing a count associated with each category for each event associated with canonical terms categorized into that category and

statistical logic operable to correlate aggregate interest of the plurality of users in a selected canonical term with aggregate interest of the plurality of users in other canonical terms, and to identify canonical terms of the other canonical terms with which, based on the statistics, users tend to search while also searching with the selected canonical term.

Claim 88 (new): The apparatus of claim 87, wherein the statistical logic is further operable to normalize to account for correlations not attributable to tendency to search with both the at least one other canonical term and the selected canonical term.

Claim 89 (new): The apparatus of claim 88, wherein the statistical logic normalizes based on a total number of searches used in forming the statistics.

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